

17/09/1998

## Talks on women's participation in SMIs

Asiah Bujang

THE Entrepreneur Development Ministry will soon hold a discussion with Wanita Umno to work out ways to facilitate women participation in business particularly in small-and-medium-scale industries (SMIs).

Its deputy minister, Datuk Idris Jusoh, said the discussion will also look into the evaluation of applications submitted by the members of the movement to the ministry.

"We will consider giving funds to members who submit specific applications on their desired businesses," he told reporters after witnessing a cheque presentation ceremony in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Idris was responding to a suggestion by Wanita Umno chief Datuk Dr Siti Zaharah Sulaiman on September 13, for the ministry to set up a "woman-friendly fund" for women entrepreneurs.

Zaharah had said many women who want to go into business were hampered by their inability to secure loans because they lacked collateral.

To this, Idris said the ministry will not set up a new fund because the present funds are sufficient.

There are five main funds under the ministry, namely the Mara loan scheme, guaranteed loan schemes under Credit Guarantee Corporation, Smart Enterprise Financing Facility, Small Entrepreneurs Fund and Franchise Fund.

Idris added that the ministry will also give advice from time to time to women who are involved in SMIs, and to show them how to put together a business proposal to convince bankers that they have viable business opportunities.

At the ceremony, Malaysia Franchise Association (MFA) chairman Datuk Adzmi Abdul Wahab received a RM15,000 cheque from Sistemaju Holdings Sdn Bhd's chief executive officer E.H Ch'ng and a RM10,000 cheque from Global Travel Network's executive chairman Abdul Khalid Datuk Abdul Aziz for the sponsorship of the Malaysia Franchise Exhibition and Conference '98 (Mafec'98).

Idris said Mafec' 98 will allow local franchisers to promote and expand their business opportunities abroad.

It will be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the Putra World Trade Centre on September 24.

A total of 87 franchisors and 350 participants will be taking part in Mafec '98 which will be held from September 24 to 27.

The organisers for the event are the ministry, MFA and the Malaysian Entrepreneurship Development Centre.

Idris said this is the second Mafec to be organised. The first Mafec was held last November.

Apart from the exhibition, a two-day seminar will also be held on September 25 and 26 on expanding businesses through franchising.

Several prominent local and overseas speakers have been invited to cover key topics related to aspects of franchising.

The exhibition will be open to the public between 9am and 5.30 pm.

(END)